

THE

לְשָׁכָה

# SHEKEL



The Journal of Israel and Jewish History and Numismatics  
Volume 48 No. 4 , October November December 2015

## Israel's money and idolatry



Graven  
images?



- *Jan Karski Remembered by David L. Ganz*
- *Julius Rosenwald built Sears and 5,500 schools*
- *Watching you: The 'Evil Eye' through history*
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*Contact Mel via E-mail: [ainapresident@gmail.com](mailto:ainapresident@gmail.com)*

*or call him: (818) 225-1348*

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## GENERAL CONTACT

Donna Sims, P.O. Box 20255, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269

*E-mail: [dancinazdonna@gmail.com](mailto:dancinazdonna@gmail.com)*

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*E-mail: [aperala@aol.com](mailto:aperala@aol.com)*

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# THE SHEKEL

THE JOURNAL OF ISRAEL AND JEWISH HISTORY AND NUMISMATICS

VOLUME XLVIII NO. 4 (NO. 262)

OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER 2015

ANDREW PERALA, EDITOR

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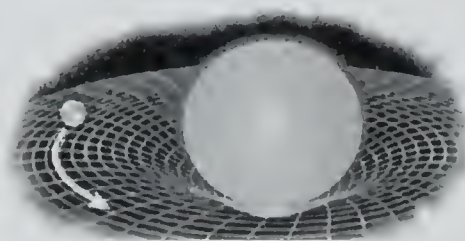
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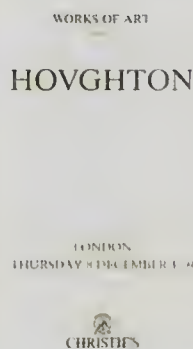
## Denmark Ag



*High relief silver medal (45 grams - 40mm) commemorates 50th anniversary of Danish Jewish community escape from the clutches of Germans. Created by Danish artist, engraver and medalist Bent Jensen, this piece features a reverse of Holger Danske, a national hero, and an obverse with Jews between the maps of Denmark and Sweden.*

## Houghton

*Works of Art from Houghton Jews - Hardcover Christie's London, 8 December 1994. Edition provides extensive information about Philip & Sybil Sassoon and their magnificent holdings. 361pp; near perfect condition; no folds, notations or markings. Unopened.*

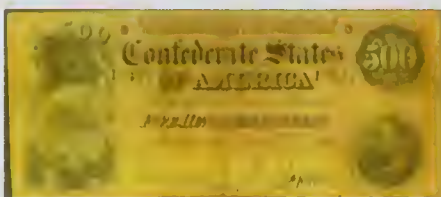


## Herzl Passport



*1850 Franz Joseph I official passport for Israel Herzl (24x40 cm). Sealed with signed revenue stamp, dated 1850. In 1815, Austria emerged from Napoleonic Wars as a powerhouse; the Hapsburgs returned to rule. This single-page passport (Reise-Pass) bears all information about Israel Herzl, including name, character, birthplace, birth year, religion, stature, hair color etc. All signed by the Gov. & General Commander of the Serbian region of Timis, western Romania and Banate, Southern Hungary. Finely printed in large format (about 9x16 inches) in blue with a decorative border. Document dated 1850, sealed with signed revenue stamp. Theodore (Tivadar/Binyamin Ze'ev) Herzl was born in Pest ( the other side of Buda - Hungary ), his family had come from Zemun (present day Serbia, by Belgrade on the Danube). But Herzl was a common name, so it could be a relative or not.*

## \$500 CSA - LAZAR



*Confederate \$500 Sealed Jewish Lazar Allendale, S.C., Genuine CSA \$500 note in nice, evenly circulated condition w/ a couple of holes by the Treasurer's signature; split/partially split sealed by an advertising band for Jewish A.H. Lazar ("THANK YOU - IT COMES FROM - CALL AGAIN - IT MUST BE QUALITY - THE PLACE TO TRADE AFTER ALL - ALLENDALE, SC")*



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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS! AND, TIME TO RENEW!

I want to wish you all a happy holiday season. Unfortunately, Israel is no longer producing Chanuka coins—but there is always chocolate Chanuka Gelt.

I want to thank Serge Huard for sending me a 2014 “100 Pesos coin” issued last year by the unrecognized country of Araucania-Patagonia that has “Merry Christmas” in seven languages – including Hebrew!

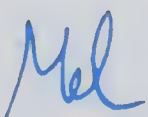
Enclosed with this issue of The Shekel is a renewal form for your AINA membership for 2016. If you have already paid for 2016 or are a Life Member then you don’t have to do anything (although we would greatly appreciate a contribution).

Otherwise, please send in your dues as quickly as possible, so that you don’t miss a single issue of our wonderful award-winning Shekel magazine.

And please consider giving AINA gift memberships as holiday gifts, for bar/bat mitzvahs, birthdays, etc.

Happy Holidays!

Wishing you all the best,



## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



*P.S. - I just learned the Israel Ministry of Finance, together with the Bank of Israel, plans to conduct a new tender for granting the license to market commemorative coins issued by the Bank of Israel. The new tender is expected to be published in the next few months. Marketing of such coins to the public will be renewed after the appointment of such a marketing company.*



# ISRAEL'S MONEY AND IDOLATRY

*POWERFUL  
DESIGNS  
USUALLY  
FOLLOWED  
STRICT  
GUIDELINES*

*BY  
SIMCHA KURITZKY, NLG*



*Above, Samson, on a 2009 Biblical Art Series commemorative, portrayed with incused lines to outline his slaying of a lion.*

**Israel** is the old-new land; the Third Jewish Commonwealth, successor to the Second Commonwealth that fell to the Romans in 70 C.E. Israel's coinage reflects this. It is well known that all circulating trade coins bear designs from ancient coins, seals, and reliefs. What is not as well known is the extent to which Israel's coinage and currency designs were impacted by the question of idolatry.

The abolition of idolatry can be traced to the Ten Commandments in the Biblical book of Exodus. Jews were told to worship only God and not to make images for worship.

However, in First Temple times (before 587 BCE) this prohibition was clearly not interpreted to ban the creation of all images, since Exodus

also records the building of the Ark of the Covenant complete with two cherubim (likely winged man-headed bulls or lions) on top, and the book of Kings describes Solomon decorating his Temple with oxen, lions, and cherubim.

During Second Temple times, Hellenic and later Roman rulers were deified, most posthumously but some during their reigns, and their images placed on coins. Jews used these coins out of necessity. In fact, the Talmud records Roman-period Jewish leaders requiring the use of shekels of Tyre for payment of religious taxes (because of the higher silver content

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than Roman coins) even though those coins showed the demigod Melqart (the Phoenecian Herakles) on one side and an eagle on the other. So one might be tempted to say that coins were secular objects and whatever images might appear on them no concern to religious authorities. Except that when Jews finally issued coins of their own, starting around 135 BCE, the coins did not follow the norm for contemporary coinage. Instead no human figures or even animals appeared on them.

The Hasmonean rulers (until 37 BCE) only showed plants, inanimate objects, and long inscriptions. The Herodians (starting in 40 BCE) had two concurrent coinages. Those minted in pagan towns did portray animals, people, and even deities.

Those minted in Jewish towns only portrayed plants and military regalia, with one exception, a small copper coin with a cornucopia on one side and an eagle standing to the right on the other. This coin may have commemorated Herod's rebuilding of the Temple and placing a gold eagle on one of the entrance gates. Zealots rioted and tore down this image. Lions and oxen may have been acceptable in Solomon's Temple, but eagles were not for Herod's. It didn't help that the eagle was the symbol of the hated Roman overlords.

During the War Against Rome (65-70 CE) and Bar Kokhba Revolt (132-135 CE), silver coins were minted by obliterating the emperor's portrait on existing coins and overstriking them. These coins portrayed ritual objects in addition to plants.

Jews didn't issue coins until a long time after 135 CE. The laws con-



*The first coin issued by the new State of Israel in 1948 was the 25 mils, which copied design elements from ancient Judaeen coins.*

cerning idolatry were expounded on in the Talmud, compiled by Rabbi Maimonides in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and summarized in the *Shulkhan Arukh* by Joseph Caro in 1565. The *Shulkhan Arukh* quickly became the standard for Jewish legal decisions. While images on coins are not explicitly discussed, there is a section on making figures which says that a human figure must be incomplete (only one eye can show), and if possible, should be recessed rather than in relief.

The modern State of Israel came into being in 1948. Chairman Kadmán of the Israel Numismatic Society suggested the new state base her coin designs on the ancient ones, and Israel only portrays ancient artifacts or motifs on her regular circulating coinage. The first coins were aluminum 25 mils minted on primitive equipment in Israel. The obverse shows a cluster of grapes from a Bar Kokhba zuz (denarius) and the reverse only has an olive wreath and inscription. The first banknotes only had geometric designs and inscrip-

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tions due to the short production schedule, and the 1952 series used the same basic designs. A coin shortage in 1952-53 caused the State of Israel to issue small change notes, and the 250 pruta note was the first Israel issued with a vignette, showing Lake Kinneret and Mt. Arbel. This landscape shows plants but no people or animals. Shortly after the government created the Bank of Israel in 1954, they issued a new series of half, one-, five-, 10-, and 50-lirot notes that also showed landscapes devoid of animal or human forms.

The Bank of Israel cites public demand as the reason for adopting notes which followed the European models by portraying people. They conferred with rabbis who agreed that portraits that had no significant depth were not graven images, so banknotes could portray people.

The rabbis also accepted the *Shulkhan Arukh's* emphasis that a graven image must have a face, so human or animal figures without eyes were also acceptable on coins. The 1955 series of notes were replaced on Oct. 15, 1959 with notes of the same denominations that showed allegorical figures of industry: a farmer, a fisherman, an industrial worker, a chemist, and a young man and woman representing youth.

Israel started producing annual non-circulating commemorative coins in 1958. The second issue in 1959 shows 11 faceless men and women representing the ingathering of the exiles. It is struck in silver and weighs 25 grams, the same as the old Latin Monetary Union 5-franc coins, but thicker and with concave surfaces.



*The 1960 Herzl coins were the first with a portrait. They featured only one eye, as permitted by the Shulkhan Arukh.*

Israel's 1960 anniversary commemorative also celebrates the centennial of the birth of Theodore Herzl, the man who is considered to be the grandfather of the State of Israel. He formed the Zionist Organization (ZO) in 1897 which eventually became the umbrella organization for all of the smaller, pre-existing Zionist groups; the Jewish National Fund which purchased and developed land; and the Anglo-Palestine Bank, which raised funds. Older Zionist groups were religious in nature; the ZO was strictly political, based on the idea that Jews, as a people, deserved a nation of their own.

Herzl died in 1904, too early to see the fruits from the seeds he planted. The Bank of Israel wanted to place his portrait on a coin, so they asked the rabbis how to do this without creating a graven image. The *Shulkhan Arukh* states that an image showing only one eye is permitted, and a sunk portrait is permitted, so the Bank developed a design that is uniquely

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Israeli: a small profile (less than a third of the surface area) placed in a sunk rounded rectangle so the image is below the rest of the coin's surface.

Beneath the bust is one of Herzl's most memorable lines in Hebrew: "[If you will it,] it is no fantasy." Israel struck silver 5-lirot and also gold 20-lirot (the same dimensions as a British gold sovereign). This was Israel's first gold coin and its only gold 20-lirot or sovereign-weight coin.

A couple of years later, Israel commemorated Chaim Weizmann on gold coins of a similar design to Herzl's. Weizmann was a German-trained chemist in London who helped the British win World War One. He convinced Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour to declare His Majesty's support for a Jewish national home in Palestine in 1917.

Weizmann also met with King Faisal of Syria in 1918 and obtained his support for Jewish settlement in what the Arabs called southern Syria. He was elected President of the Zionist Organization in 1920, the same year the San Remo Treaty recognized British control over the Jewish homeland.

Weizmann founded what became the Weizmann Institute of Science in 1934 after resigning from the ZO. After independence, Weizmann served as Israel's first president until his death on Nov. 9, 1952. The Bank of Israel issued gold 50- and 100-lirot on the 10th anniversary of Weizmann's death. Both coins have Weizmann's profile in a sunken rounded rectangle with his name below.

The last coins that used the distinctive profile in sunken rectangle design honored Ben-Gurion a year after his



*In 1974, the Bank of Israel honored David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, in silver and gold one year after his death.*

death. David Ben-Gurion was a revolutionary in Czarist Russia who left in 1905. His attempt to organize a Jewish Brigade to defend Turkey against Russia in WWI failed when the Turks expelled him and all Jews of Russian origin. He joined the British Jewish Legion after the Balfour Declaration.

From 1920-33, Ben-Gurion served as the head of *Histadrut*, the national labor organization, a position he left to become the head of the Jewish Agency (the Jewish government under the British in Palestine).

In that capacity, he announced Israel's independence in 1948. Ben-Gurion served as Israel's first Prime Minister until 1953, retiring but then serving again as Prime Minister from 1955-63. He finally retired from parliament in 1969 and passed away in late 1973. The Bank of Israel honored him in 1974 with silver 25-lirot and gold 500-lirot coins, the first coins of those denominations.

The first coin to portray an animal was the Hanukkah one-pound coin of 1960 which commemorated Henrietta

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Szold's 100th birthday. However, the portrait of a young woman cradling a lamb was clearly allegorical.

The next year, however, the copper-nickel one-lira Hanukkah coin portrayed a tiny image of Eleazar, brother of Judah the Maccabee, stabbing a realistically portrayed Seleukid war elephant in 162 BCE, all in a sunken irregular pentagon. Eleazar was subsequently crushed by the dying elephant.

The Bank of Israel decided to replace allegorical figures with busts of real individuals on their next series of banknotes. While the Palestine Currency Board issued £100 notes, the highest denomination Israel issued was I£50 until February, 1969.

In Palestine, a hundred pounds was equivalent to U.S. \$485, more than most workers then earned in a year. By 1969, it was worth only \$28.60, just several days' wages. The honor of the first portrait, and on the highest denomination note, went again to Theodore Benjamin Herzl.

Over the next three years, all denominations were changed to use actual person's portraits: the 50-lirot showed Weizmann, the 10-lirot poet Chaim Bialik, and the 5-lirot physicist Albert Einstein.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Israel's population and economy grew, and so did the cost of living. The half and one lira notes were replaced with coins in 1963, and the 5-lirot note portraying Henrietta Szold was replaced with a coin in 1978.

The Bank of Israel replaced the lira with the sheqel in 1980 at a ratio of 10 to one, and both the five lirot coin of 1978-80 and the equivalent half-



*Israel's 1960 one-pound commemorative coin for the 100th birthday of Hadassah founder Henrietta Szold's birth, with a shepherdess cradling a newborn lamb, an allegorical reference to the Youth Aliya program.*

sheqel coin of 1980-84 are the only circulating coins to portray an animal.

The stylized roaring lion is clearly based on the 8th century BCE seal of Shema found in Meggido in 1904. Technically, the coins portray the main design element from the seal and not an actual lion, so it does not constitute a graven image.

A new rabbinic ruling said that portraits on non-circulating commemoratives, just like those on medals, were not graven images.

Shortly after Israel switched from the lira to the sheqel in 1980, the Bank of Israel issued a commemorative of Ze'ev Jabotinsky on the centennial of his birth. Then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin was the first head of government who was a follower of Jabotinsky. During World War One, Turkey expelled Jabotinsky to Egypt where he lobbied for a Jewish Legion in the British Army (which the British eventually created).

Jabotinsky wanted the Jewish

*Continued*



*Ze'ev Jabotinsky portrayed on Israel's 500-sheqel gold commemorative coin issued in 1980. The three-quarter left-facing image was the first full-size non-profile human portrait on a coin of Israel.*



*Continued*

Legion to protect Jews in Palestine against predatory Arabs, but the British disbanded it after the war ended, so he founded the *Haganah* as the Jewish Defense Organization in 1920. Jabotinsky supported immediate, large-scale Jewish immigration from endangered communities in Europe, which put him at odds with the British Government and hence Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, so he created the Revisionist faction in 1925 which split off from the ZO to form the New Zionist Organization in 1935.

Jabotinsky was organizing a British Jewish Brigade to fight Hitler when he died of a heart attack in 1940. That Brigade was later formed and fought in Italy in 1944-45. The Bank honored Jabotinsky with a silver 25-sheqel and gold one-half ounce 500-sheqel coin. These were the only coins minted in those denominations. The three-quarters left portrait of Jabotinsky was the first full-size non-profile human portrait on Israel's coins.

The only other commemorative Israel ever issued with a raised, non-profile portrait, with no concern for violating the graven image injunction

from the *Shulkhan Arukh*, were the silver 2-sheqalim and gold one-half ounce 10-sheqalim issued in 1982 for Baron Edmond de Rothschild.

The first of the modern agricultural settlements in the Holy Land was Rishon LeTziyon (lit., "First of Zion") founded in 1882. When they had difficulties growing crops, financier Edmond de Rothschild sent experts who had them grow grapes and found the Carmel Winery, still in operation today. Rothschild financed dozens of Jewish settlements starting in the 1880s. The coins show his facing bust with the simple inscription "Father of the Community" in Hebrew.

Inflation worsened as Israel's economy transitioned from socialism to freemarket. Almost every year of the sheqel monetary system saw new coins introduced to replace low-value notes. In 1981, a one-sheqel coin replaced the note which portrayed Sir Montefiore, and a five-sheqalim coin replaced the note portraying Weizmann. On Feb. 25, 1982 the Bank of Israel replaced the 10-sheqalim note which portrayed Herzl with a coin, which was worth 55 U.S. cents.

The Bank of Israel decided to bid

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Herzl goodbye with a special circulating commemorative portraying the grandfather of the State, but how to portray him on a circulating coin without upsetting Israel's religious Jews? The answer was actually designed a few years earlier at the Bern Mint in Switzerland.

The year 1979 was the centennial of the birth of Albert Einstein, perhaps the most famous scientist. He was born in Germany but was working as a patent clerk in Switzerland when he wrote his famous Theory of Relativity. Switzerland issued a copper-nickel five-franc commemorative coin with a unique portrait of the genius.

The coin has rough and smooth areas. When light shines on the surface, the smooth areas appear white and the rough black, simulating a photograph. The rough areas repeat the letter E, which stands both for Einstein and for Energy in his breakthrough formula

$$E = mc^2.$$

The Swiss commemorative was noticed by Bank of Israel officials, since they had portrayed Einstein on the five-lirot banknote issued from Jan. 13, 1972 until March 11, 1976 when it was replaced by a new note showing Henrietta Szold's bust.

Israel's Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren as well as Rabbi Abraham Shapiro, Chairman of the Advisory Council of the Bank of Israel, approved the use of a photo-like image on circulating coinage.

The Herzl 10-sheqalim coin was issued into circulation on Jan. 10, 1984, when it had an exchange value of about eight U.S. cents. This profile portrait is taken from a famous photograph of Herzl looking out of a balcony at the first Zionist Confer-



*Albert Einstein portrayed artistically on a 1979 Switzerland commemorative.*

ence in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. It is the only coin in this series that does not use the portrait from the banknote it replaced. The dark areas are formed by Herzl repeated in Hebrew.

The 50-sheqalim banknote portraying Ben-Gurion was replaced by an aluminum-bronze coin on March 8, 1984, when it was worth 33 U.S. cents. The special Ben-Gurion commemorative coin was issued Jan. 2, 1985, when it was worth seven U.S. cents. The portrait used is the same as on the original 500-lirot banknote introduced on May 26, 1977 when it was worth about U.S. \$50 and is also on the 50-sheqalim banknote first issued on February 24, 1980 (worth U.S. \$12.50). The rough areas of the design are formed by tiny candelabras (*menorot*), as shown in Israel's state coat of arms and from the Titus Monument in Rome. David Ben-Gurion's signature appears on his neck.

Jabotinsky's turn came a few months later. His portrait first appeared on the 100-sheqalim banknote issued December 11, 1980 (shortly

*Continued*





*Israel's 1984 10-sheqalim coin features a profile portrait of Theodore Herzl adapted from a famous 1897 photograph. The text surrounding the portrait spells Herzl in Hebrew.*

*Continued*

after the silver and gold commemorative coins with his portrait) when it was worth about U.S. \$13. This was the first new denomination banknote introduced under the sheqel system. The note was replaced by a copper-nickel coin on May 2, 1984 when it was worth 55 U.S. cents, and the Jabotinsky coin was issued on May 12, 1985 when it was worth 10 cents. The rough areas are formed by interlocking hexagrams (*Magen David*) and Jabotinsky's signature appears at bottom left.

To commemorate the centennial of the first modern Jewish agricultural enterprises in the Land of Israel, the Bank commemorated benefactor Baron Rothschild on coins mentioned earlier and on the 500 sheqalim banknote issued on December 1, 1982 when it was worth U.S. \$15. The Bank of Israel introduced the new sheqel on Sept. 4, 1985, and the 500-sheqalim banknote, now worth 33 cents, was replaced by an aluminum-bronze half new-sheqel coin. The Rothschild portrait coin was released on July 27, 1986 (still



*Israel's 1984 50-sheqalim commemorative coin features a profile portrait of David Ben-Gurion in the same style as the Herzl 1984 10-sheqalim coin shown above.*

worth 33 cents). The rough areas are composed of the names of the 44 villages that the Baron supported (these were also listed in micro-script on the aforementioned banknotes). The name Edmond de Rothschild appears in Hebrew on the right.

Also included in the new sheqel coinage was the one new-sheqel coin, which replaced the 1,000 sheqalim banknote portraying an imagined

*Continued*





*Israel's 1983 1,000-sheqalim note featured an imagined portrait of Rabbi Moses ben Maimon. (known as Maimonides or The Rambam); no images of the famous 13<sup>th</sup> century scholar were made in his lifetime.*

*Continued*

portrait of Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (there are no images of the famous 13th century scholar made in his lifetime), known as The Rambam or Maimonides.

The notes show in the background a page from his most famous work, *Mishneh Torah*, the first-ever compilation of Jewish law organized by topic. The note had been introduced Nov. 17, 1983 when it was worth U.S. \$11, and was replaced by a small copper-nickel coin worth 67 cents on Sept. 4, 1985.

But the public complained that the button-shaped coin was worth too much for its small size, so the Bank issued a one new sheqel banknote on May 8, 1986 which wasn't retired until July 27, 1988 when the Maimonides portrait new sheqel coin was produced (and the sheqel was worth U.S. 63 cents). These coins use a very subtle pattern where the raised (dark) portions were sand-blasted while the sunken (light) portions were polished.

His acronym "The Rambam" appears in Hebrew at bottom left.

The new sheqel held its value much better than the original, but by 1990 its value was down to 52 cents. Israel issued a new, 12-sided copper-nickel 5 new sheqalim coin on January 2, 1990 (worth U.S. \$2.59), replacing the banknote portraying Levi Eshkol that had been introduced as a 5000 sheqalim note on Aug. 9, 1984 when it was worth U.S. \$16.

Eshkol was Finance Minister from 1952 to 1963 and succeeded Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister in 1963, a post he held until he died of a heart attack in 1969. His main accomplishment was the national water carrier pipeline. While the Six-Day War occurred on Eshkol's watch, he was widely criticized for indecisiveness prior to the war. His portrait coin was issued Sept. 12, 1990 (worth U.S. \$2.46). The rough areas are formed by straight vertical lines, and his name Levi Eshkol appears in Hebrew

*Continued*



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at the bottom left.

The Bank of Israel regretted not commemorating Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, when the five sheqalim note with his portrait was retired in 1982, so a decade later they put his portrait on a five new sheqalim coin issued Nov. 17, 1992 (40 years and eight days after his death) when it was worth U.S. \$2.02, using the same dimensions as the Eshkol coin. The rough areas are a series of dots, and Weizmann's signature is on the bottom left. This is the only coin in the series produced domestically at the Jerusalem mint. The Bank of Israel also issued 8,000 special sets including one of each portrait coin from the Herzl 10-sheqalim to the Weizmann five new sheqalim. While all the other coins were included in the annual mint sets for the year of their issue, only this special set included the Weizmann coin.

The last portrait circulating coin issued was for Golda Meir, one of Israel's best known leaders. Golda is the only person in this series that grew up in the United States, but she moved to the Land of Israel in 1921 shortly after marrying her first husband. She served Israel's national labor organization, rising to an executive position, and also served in the Jewish and later Israel governments, eventually as prime minister from 1969 to 1974. She passed away in 1980. The Bank of Israel first planned to place her portrait on a 2,000 sheqalim banknote in 1984, but changed it to a 10,000 sheqalim because of the raging inflation. The banknote was worth U.S. \$16 when issued in Nov. 27, 1984; was worth U.S. \$6.70 when replaced by the 10 new sheqalim note in 1985;

and \$3.33 when replaced by Israel's only bi-metallic coin on Feb. 7, 1995. Her portrait is composed of vertical lines and appears on a coin issued on June 27, 1995 (when it was still worth \$3.33). The coin is made of aureate bonded-bronze in the center with a nickel bonded-steel ring.

All the "flat" portraiture commemorative coins were available from post offices at face value. The first few circulated only briefly due to the high rate of inflation, but the coins from half to 10 new sheqalim still do circulate.

The next coin denomination Israel introduced was the two new sheqalim in 2008 which did not replace a banknote so there was no portrait coin commemorative. Since the lowest current denomination banknote value of 20 new sheqalim is still worth almost U.S. \$6, there are no plans to replace it with a coin.

Israel started a Biblical Art series of commemoratives in 1994. Because of the religious nature of the topic as well as the presumed collector market, the Bank of Israel decided to abide by the earlier rules against a raised facing portrait. All coins were issued as a small silver new sheqel, a crown-sized silver two sheqalim, and a half-ounce gold 10 sheqalim. Most years Israel also issued a 0.04 ounce gold sheqel, usually sold in a pendant.

The first coins of the series reproduce paintings by only showing the outline of the people and objects, where the people are facing forward. The first Biblical Art coin is based on a Rembrandt painting of the angel stopping Abraham from sacrificing Isaac (*Genesis Chapter 22*), the second shows King Solomon on his

*Continued*



*Coins from Israel's Biblical Art series depict portraits from different perspectives. Above, left, the 2009 coin with Samson slaying a lion, in an incused outline. Above, right, Abraham greeting the angels on the 2006 coin, in a profile depiction. At right, the 2010 award-winning Jonah and the Whale commemorative coin, in gold, with Jonah in profile.*

*Continued*

throne (mostly described in Kings and Chronicles), and the third shows Miriam leading women in the Song of the Sea (*Exodus Chapter 15*).

Starting in the fourth year of the series, Israel introduced raised artwork but the figures appear only in profile. The majority of commemoratives fall into this class. They portray Noah (1998), Abraham (1999), Joseph (2000), Rachel and Jacob (2003), Moses (2005), Abraham greeting the angels (2006), a wolf and lamb (2007), Moses parting the Sea of Reeds (2008), Elijah in the whirlwind (2011), and Daniel in the lions' den (2012).

The 2009 Samson coin uses the same style of line drawing of the original coins but with thicker, incuse lines, similar to ancient Mesopotamian artwork. The scene shows Samson wrestling a lion (*Judges Chapter 14*), with Samson's hair looking much like the lion's mane. In 2010, Israel issued a coin commemorating the ancient prophet Jonah which shows a whale in raised profile facing left, and a stylized man with arms wide in prayer, incuse inside the whale (*Jonah Chapter 2*). The whale is shaped similar to the Chinese Yang in the Tao.

This design won Krause Publica-

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tions' "Coin of the Year" award (and Most Artistic Coin) for coins issued in 2010.

In 2005, Israel started a series for Israel's Nobel prize winners. The first honors Einstein, who was not an Israel citizen but was a supporter of Hebrew University, friend of Weizmann, and was offered the presidency after Weizmann's passing. The coins also commemorated the centennial of his publishing the Theory of Relativity. Relativity is based on the fact that subatomic particles also act as waves, and Einstein's bust on the coin is composed of concentric circles simulating waves. Below is the famous equation  $E = mc^2$  in Einstein's handwriting, while around the edge is THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY 1905-2005 in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. The other three coins in the series issued so far (Agnon in 2008, Begin in 2010, and Rabin in 2011) all show a raised portrait in profile.

The modern State of Israel is the Third Jewish Commonwealth. Her coinage mixes images from the ancient Second Commonwealth and modern times. Her use of portraiture reflects both current techniques as well as ancient and medieval sensibilities. □

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# JAN KARSKI REMEMBERED

REFLECTIONS ON  
THE SHOAH HERO  
BY A FORMER STUDENT AND  
RENOWNED NUMISMATIST

*BY DAVID L. GANZ*

*Jan Karski in 1943.*

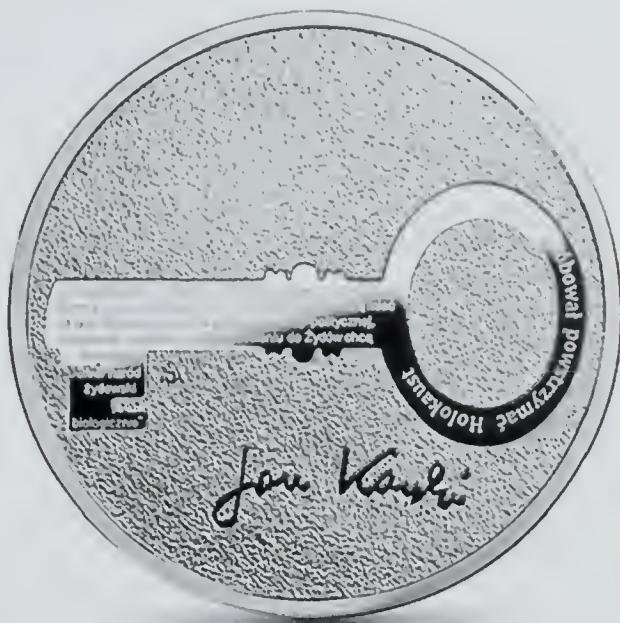
*Photo courtesy Jan Karski Foundation*

**J**an Karski (1914-2000), who I was privileged to know as a Professor teaching the two semester course “Modern Foreign Governments” at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. (1970-1971) was a modest man. In his 1978 interview with Claude Lanzmann, who chronicled portions of the Holocaust, he said of himself: “I was an insignificant little man. My mission was important.”

To put this in context, in July 1942, the German Nazis began mass deportations of Jews from occupied Warsaw to the Treblinka death camp. Karski, a young Polish diplomat-turned-courier for the Polish Underground took on a mission of mind-boggling significance. He volunteered to carry to the Free World an eyewitness report of the destruction of the Jewish people of Poland. Twice he penetrated the Warsaw Ghetto

*Continued*





*Poland's 2014 10 zloty proof commemorative honoring Jan Karski won Most Inspirational Coin of the Year honors. The reverse features an hollowed-out key, which Karski used to smuggle intelligence to the Allies; note the reverse micro-printing within the key. Below: The Jan Karski Society was honored in 2010 with the medal "Distinguished for Tolerance" medal by the Ecumenical Foundation "Tolerance."*

*Continued*

and later the Izbica Lubelska transit camp. (U.S. Holocaust Museum web site, 2013).

Against overwhelming odds, using multiple false identities, Karski reached London by the end of November. There he prepared detailed written reports for the London-based Polish Government-in-Exile and briefed British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. He was then sent to Washington where he met with President Franklin D. Roosevelt for an hour in the Oval Office.

Karski, who lived to age 86, considered the inaction of the Free World to be mankind's



“second Original Sin.” His recorded testimony remains one of the most eloquent statements against war and calls for action when confronted with acts of discrimination and degradation, injustice and brutality – preconditions for political murder and genocide.

In Tape reels 3133 (Camera rolls No. One to Five), Karski, who had not spoken of genocide for over 20 years, and repeatedly refused other requests to be interviewed, told Claude Lanzmann (*Shoah, The Karski Report*) of his report of his meetings with Allied leaders,

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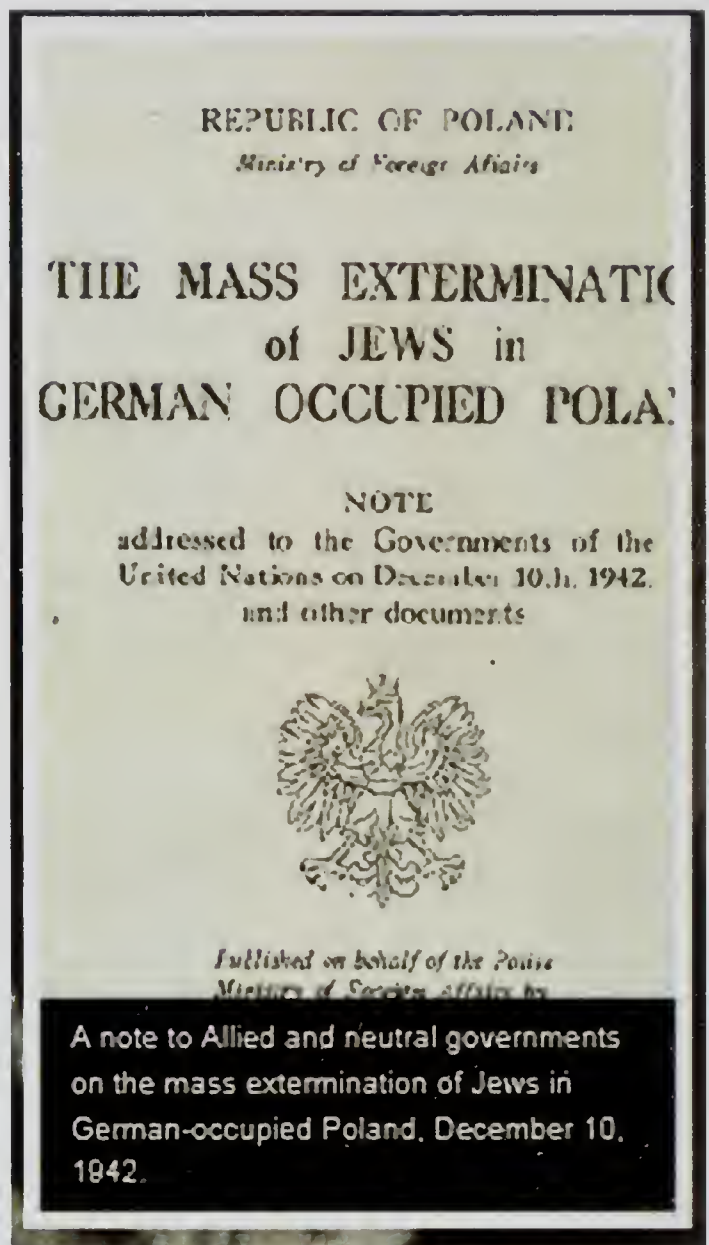
including President Franklin Roosevelt, to tell them about the situation in Poland and alert them to the reality of genocide.

Karski returned to Europe, was captured by the Nazis and bayoneted in the throat (which gave his high-pitched voice a gravel quality), but he did not reveal any information and cut both of his wrists and was transported to various hospitals under the supervision of the Gestapo. With help, Karski escaped from a hospital in Warsaw and after a period of recuperation went to Krakow in 1940. In 1942, he resumed his service as a courier and met with major political parties to deliver messages from the delegates of the Polish Government.

He explains that the messages were never written down, but were either memorized or on microfilm.

Karski was contacted by representatives of the Jewish underground, who he refers to as the Bund leader (Leon Feiner) and the Zionist leader (Bermann), and met with them in a house near but not in the ghetto.

In a manner that Karski describes as desperate, the two leaders asked Karski to take messages to London about the extermination of the Jews. Karski was asked to tell the exiled



*THEY KNEW* - Allied governments were well aware of the genocide taking place, as this cover sheet from a report presented by the Polish government, and based in part on Jan Karski's work, to the United Nations in December 1942.

*Image courtesy Jan Karski Foundation*

Polish president to contact the Catholic Pope. He was also told not to contact non-Polish Jewish leaders in London because they might become too alarmed and “complicate” matters.

Claude Lanzmann spent more than 10 years searching for survivors, perpetrators, and eyewitnesses for his nine and a half hour film “Shoah” released in 1985. Without archival footage

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*In 2014, the Bank of Poland also issued a 2 zloty coin in copper-nickel-zinc and a 200 zloty gold coin to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Jan Karski.*

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or dramatic enactment, “Shoah” weaves together extraordinary testimonies to render the step-by-step machinery of the destruction of European Jewry. Critics have called it “a masterpiece” and a “monument against forgetting.”

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum purchased the Shoah outtakes from Claude Lanzmann on October 11, 1996. The Claude Lanzmann Shoah Collection is now jointly owned by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Yad Vashem - The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority.

When Karski entered the Ghetto, nearly 300,000 Jews had already been deported.

In autumn 1942, Karski undertook his last, and most important mission – one that could have saved the remaining

Jews of Poland. He witnessed the ongoing destruction of the Jews of Poland, so that could deliver an eyewitness account of the “Final Solution.” He was twice smuggled into the Warsaw Ghetto to see the plight of the Jews.

“This was not the world. It was not humanity. It was some hell.” - Karski said 36 years later to Claude Lanzmann.

Jewish leaders who smuggled Karski into the Ghetto arranged for him to visit a German Nazi transit camp to witness Jews being herded onto trains, to be sent to their deaths. Karski entered the Izbica transit camp in disguise. For years he thought he had been in the concentration camp in Belzec, as he described it in his 1944 book, “Story of a Secret State.” Later he recalled this dreadful experience in his interview for Lanzmann’s “Sho-

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*Among many other national honors, Jan Karski's legacy was recognized posthumously in 2012 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom conferred by President Barack Obama.*

*Continued*

ah.” Karski delivered his shocking eyewitness account to dozens of people – politicians, journalists, writers – the leaders of the Free World. He reported to British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter and even to U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself. The emissary pleaded with leaders to act. Transmitting the demand of the Jewish leaders, he gave a detailed account of what he had seen. “I was a camera,” “I was a machine,” “I was like a gramophone record” – he used to say later.

After the war, unable to return to Poland, Karski began his new life in America. He struggled, renovating homes to supplement his income. He was invited by Georgetown University’s president Fr. Edmund A. Walsh

to pursue an academic career. Georgetown became Karski’s home for over 40 years, where he taught in the School of Foreign Service, influencing generations of future leaders. In 1952, Jan Karski earned his Ph.D. at Georgetown University.

In 1965, Jan Karski married Polish-Jewish dancer-choreographer Pola Nirenska, the love of his life. Most of her Jewish family was murdered in death camps during the war. Only Nirenska and her parents managed to escape. She left Poland early in the interwar period, following her dream of becoming a dancer, while her parents emigrated to Palestine in the 1930s, having an inkling of the coming threat to the Jews of Europe.

In the early 1980s Karski

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began his “second mission”: Reminding the world of the indifference of the Allies.

“The Lord assigned me a role to speak and write during the war, when - as it seemed to me - it might help. It did not. When the war came to its end, I learned that the governments, the leaders, the scholars, the writers did not know what had been happening to the Jews. They were taken by surprise. The murder of six million innocents was a secret, a ‘terrible secret’ ... Then I became a Jew. But I am a Christian Jew. I am a practicing Catholic ... My faith tells me the second Original Sin has been committed by humanity: through commission, or omission, or self-imposed ignorance, or insensitivity, or self-interest, or hypocrisy, or heartless rationalization. This sin will haunt humanity to the end of time. It does haunt me. And I want it to be so.”

In June 1982, Jan Karski planted his tree on the Avenue of the Righteous among the Nations on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem. In subsequent years, many significant honors were bestowed on him: the Anti-Defamation League Courage to Care Award (1988,



*Jan Karski received Poland's highest civilian award, The White Eagle.*

which in 2012 was renamed the Jan Karski Courage to Care Award); Pius XI Award (1990); the Eisenhower Liberation Medal (1991); the Wallenberg Medal (1991); and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2012) conferred by President Barack Obama.

On June 7, 1982, Yad Vashem recognized Jan Karski as Righteous Among the Nations.

On May 12, 1994, Professor Karski was awarded honorary citizenship of Israel; less than a year later, in 1995, Karski received the highest Polish civilian award from President Lech Walesa, The White Eagle.

Jan Karski died on July 13, 2000, but his legacy endures. ▢

*The author is chairman of the board of Chosen Freeholders of Bregan County, N.J., and a practicing lawyer (Managing Partner in Ganz & Hollinger, P.C, New York, N.Y., and Ganz & Sivin, LLP, in Fair Lawn, N.J., as well as a past president of the American Numismatic Association and long-time AINA member.*

# HIDDEN LEGACY

*THE MAN WHO BUILT  
SEARS, ROEBUCK INTO A  
MAIL-ORDER GIANT  
ALSO BUILT 5,500 SCHOOLS  
FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS*



*R*osenwald is a new Aviva Kempner documentary film on the extraordinary story of how businessman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald joined with African American communities in the South to build 5,500 schools for their children during the early part of the 20th century.

This historical partnership as well as the modern-day attempts to maintain or reconfigure the schools is a great dramatic story, yet too little known about Rosenwald's philanthropy.

*Top: Julius Rosenwald gave millions to help educate black children during the early 20th century.*

*Above: Rosenwald poses with students from one of the thousands of schools he founded in the U.S. Deep South.*

Born in the heart of the Land of Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois; Julius Rosenwald, the son of German-Jewish immigrants, rose to become one of the wealthiest men in America as well as a beloved humanitarian. As the son of a clothier, he naturally went into the

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family business, and then married the daughter of a competitor. He then teamed up with Richard Sears to build Sears, Roebuck and Co. and helped diversify the company, positioning it to be known as the direct extension of the farmer's eyes, ears and wallet - making purchasing decisions in the best interest of the farmer. He became president of Sears from 1908 to 1924 and was its chairman from 1924 to 1932.

Influenced by the social gospel espoused by Rabbi Emil Hirsch of Chicago Sinai Congregation, Rosenwald used his great wealth and talent for leadership to try to fix what he viewed as wrong with the world. Rosenwald took a leadership role in establishing social services to meet the needs of some 100,000 impoverished Jewish immigrants who settled in Chicago at the turn of the 20th century; and later, in uniting the city's splintered German and Eastern European Jewish communities. Growing up near the Lincoln residence in Springfield foreshadowed his liberal politics and concerns with justice for African Americans. Rosenwald's exposure to poverty and the huge masses of immigrants in New York City also influenced his views. All told, Rosenwald gave \$63 million to various causes, which in today's dollars is equivalent to more than 10 times that amount.

Rosenwald's philanthropy took a dramatic turn after reading accounts by



*Julius Rosenwald silver medal issued by the Judaic Commemorative Society in The History of American Jews series, designed by Karen Worth.*

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African American thinkers. Booker T. Washington's accomplishments parallel what Rosenwald had achieved. Washington approached Julius Rosenwald in 1912 to assist in funding a program in line with Washington's belief of self-help for African American southerners that emphasized economic advancement through vocational education.

Rosenwald spurred the establishment of 25 YMCA-YWCAs to serve African Americans in cities across the U.S., including the Wabash Avenue YMCA in Chicago. (Existing Y's at the time served only whites.) In addition, he established one of the nation's first housing projects on Chicago's South Side.

Rosenwald's greatest accomplishment is the establishment of challenge grants, seeded for the creation of more than 5,500 schools for poor, rural African American children in southern states at a time when few received any public education.

From 1915 to 1932, 660,000 rural southern African American students benefited from an initiative that truly speaks to The American Dream. The story of the partnership between Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington is perhaps the most compelling one of our time.

What did it mean to a community to

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have a Rosenwald School? At the time, most public schools for rural African Americans - if there were schools at all - were run-down buildings with few, if any, amenities.

If the county didn't provide a public building, the children learned in lodge halls and churches. To have a school and teachers meant that the next generation would have a chance to move away from the often grinding poverty found in such areas, and not be solely dependent upon the land for sustenance. Serving as somewhat of a model was The Tuskegee Institute, which trained African Americans in skills related to the building and agricultural trades, and teaching – all of which influenced the development of the Rosenwald Schools.

Washington also developed tremendous skills in fundraising, and negotiating between the white and African American communities, which laid the groundwork for establishing the Rosenwald schools. At the time of their construction and heyday, Rosenwald Schools were a household name in the Deep South.

The list of well-known alumni and educators include the forebears of Oprah Winfrey, Spike Lee, Tony Award-winning playwright George Wolfe, and Julian Bond. Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post columnist Eugene Robinson also attended a Rosenwald school. So respected was Julius Rosenwald in school communities, his portrait graced classroom walls alongside that of President Abraham Lincoln, and schoolchildren composed songs and poems to be



*The Julius Rosenwald Memorial Award is presented annually by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.*

*Image courtesy JFMC*

performed in his honor at annual appreciation events. The project is not as well known today because Rosenwald directed in his will that after his death (he died in 1932), the schools not bear his name and that funding cease.

At one of the first meetings of the Rosenwald Fund board, it was decided to give fellowships in a variety of fields to gifted African Americans and white Southerners in order to give them one to three years to concentrate on their work and develop their abilities. These fellowships ranged from between \$1,500 and \$2,000, an enormous sum during the Great Depression.

Between 1928-48, Fellowships totaling \$1.65 million were given out to recipients including Marian Anderson, Romare Bearden, Ralph Bunche, W. E. B. DuBois, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, Gordon Parks, James Baldwin, Jacob Lawrence and Claude MacKay. ▢

*Source: [www.rosenwaldfilm.org](http://www.rosenwaldfilm.org)*



# ELIZABETH “ESTHER” TALLER:

*AN EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN IN EXTRAORDINARY TIMES*

Elizabeth Taller, known to her family as “Esther of Beszie” passed away in her home on March 8, 2015 at the age of 86. Esther was a survivor of the Holocaust. In April 1944, shortly after her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, she was transported from a small village in Hungary to Auschwitz with her mother, three younger brothers, her grandmother and extended family members, who perished there.

Esther was selected for slave labor and sent to various factories and camps until the very end of World War II. In early May 1945, she was freed and returned home. On her way home, she stopped in Debrecen, Hungary, where a person told her that her father was just there. Esther recounted this story to her children and friends, stating with a shout, “and I am not alone!”

Her father, Shmuel Haberman survived, as well as her older brother Joseph, after being sent to camps before the transport of other Jews was organized. Esther recounted that from her town, Leyte-Vertes, she was the only one of 72 in that transport to survive.

In December 1946, she married Morris Taller, a Jewish Soviet officer. As recounted to this author one afternoon in Tel Hanan, Israel, Kepichbache, the father of Aunt Juci, Joseph Haberman’s wife, the Jewish refugee organizers, among whom Kepichbache was a leader in eastern Hungary, persuaded Morris to accomplish a daring feat by leaving the Soviet army and joining other Jewish refugees making their way to displaced persons camps in Italy.

Morris and Esther were deeply grateful



*Morris and Elizabeth “Esther” Taller*

to Morris’ first cousins Ida and Leo Blackman and the extended Blackman family for inviting them to America and Los Angeles County where they made their home.

In the early 1960s, Esther, in addition to being a devoted homemaker, was active in numismatics. For Esther, this was a hobby as well as a small business which helped to supplement the family income.

Esther was a founding member of the Los Angeles chapter of the American Israel Numismatic Association, and she enthusiastically helped promote Israel numismatics as a form of art as well as a way to support the state of Israel. She won awards for displays she created; one of her displays was exhibited at the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley, CA.

Esther was also a needlepoint artist, and while not drawing the canvas, she made detailed needlepoint with the passion and eye equal to the best classical artists whose canvasses she enlivened.

Esther enjoyed gardening, and her home in Rosemead was surrounded with colorful flowers, trees and shrubs. ♪

*By Martin Taller*

# LOU LENHART 1921-2015

## *FAMED FIGHTER PILOT LEADER OF 1ST SQUADRON OF ISRAEL AIR FORCE - HERO OF 1948 DEFENSE OF TEL AVIV*

The first Israel Air Force war hero, Lou Lenart, passed away July 15, 2015.

Lenart is credited with leading the attack against invading Egyptian forces on May 29, 1948, that came within 16 miles of Tel Aviv.

The four Avia S-199 fighter aircraft were World War II surplus built in Czechoslovakia. Lenhart and three other pilots went to Czechoslovakia to learn the techniques of flying this Spitfire lookalike.

Prior to moving to Israel in 1948, Lenhart had served in the U.S. Army Air Force, flying the Corsair multi-role aircraft in the Pacific theater during WWII.

Training in Czechoslovakia was minimal; the pilots had to return to Israel to form, in secret, the foundation of the Israel Air Force. With the country having just declared its independence, the young nation was immediately besieged by its neighbors, including Egypt.

Thus it was that Lenhart and his fellow pilots, with less than two



*The Avia S-199, the first fighter plane in the Israel Air Force, is depicted on the 12th medal of the "Airplanes that made history" series. Lou Lenhart was one of the pilots of the first four Avia S-199 aircraft.*

hours in the Avia S-199 cockpit, launched a counter-offensive attack against a much larger Egyptian invasion force on May 29, 1948.

Commanding generals of the 10,000 Egyptian troops were expecting to move into Tel Aviv, just 16 miles distant, when Lenhart and colleagues attacked.

So raw were the Israeli pilots in their untested aircraft that they had never had the chance to fire the plane's 20-millimeter cannon or drop 70 kilo bombs from the wing racks.

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*Lou Lenhart (1921-2015) at left in 1948 with his fellow pilots and one of their fighter planes.*

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One of the other three pilots was Ezer Weizman, future president of Israel.

The Egyptian forces had been assured by their intelligence operatives and their generals that Israel had no aircraft, no way to control the air near or above Israel.

The sudden appearance of four advanced fighter planes that some have called customized Messerschmitts over the Egyptian army stunned its commanders.

The four Israeli pilots dropped their bombs, then circled back to strafe the now panicked Egyptians.

Some of the cannons on the Israeli planes jammed; one aircraft was lost and another damaged beyond repair.

But the mission had been accomplished. The Egyptians turned back, and Tel Aviv was saved. The strike focused the world's attention

on Israel's newly arrived Air Force, cementing the foundation of a reputation as one of the world's best.

Following the successful defense of Tel Aviv, and his ensuing successes as an air commander on the southern front, Lenhart would be hailed as the nation's Chuck Yeager, high praise.

Eventually, Lenhart's service in the wars to defend Israel would be over and he turned to civilian life.

He would become a pilot for El Al, conduct aerial mapping over Central America and become a producer of the American film "Iron Eagle."

He even became the General Manager of the San Diego Clippers in the National Basketball Association. Lenhart returned to Israel in later life, to reside in Ra'anana, where he passed away on July 20, 2015. ▢

# THE BENEFICIENT ISRAELITE MEDAL



The “Beneficient Israelite” bronze medal is 71mm high x 48mm wide, and weighs 80.2 gm.

In 1920, the award medal of “*The Beneficient Isrealite*” Charity was presented to Raphael Georges Levy (a noted Jewish educator, banker, economist and politician).

The obverse features Benevolence-France by a tree, her arm resting on shield with motto MOTHERLAND, BROTHERHOOD, CHARITY; her other hand is atop a fasces, with inscription below: “LA BIENFAISANTE ISRAELITE.”

The reverse contains an inscription in three lines: “LA BIENFAISANTE ISRAELITE / FONDÉE EN 1843,” with an engraved inscription below: TEMOIGNAGE DE RECONNAISSANCE (Testimony of Recognition)/A MR. RAPHAEL GEORGES LÉVY/28 NOVEMBRE 1920 (the same year in

which he was elected to the French Senate!).

The La Bienfaisante Israélite (the Beneficient Isrealite) was founded in 1843 with the main purpose of supporting unmarried men and apprentices, but also to organize social gatherings.

Another purpose of the society was to protect all members of the Jewish community in case of need, and it also played an important role in the wider Jewish world as it provided direct financial support to Jewish families in the Alsace as well as in Palestine.

The medal was designed by sculptor Emmanuel Hannaux (born 1855), a native of Metz in French Switzerland, who specialized in Jewish-related subjects. ▣





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# REMEMBER



## *2009 POLAND COINS COMMEMORATE THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST TRANSPORT FROM THE LODZ GHETTO TO AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU*

**A**ugust 29, 1944 marks the day of the last transport from the Lodz Ghetto, called Litzmannstadt Ghetto by the Germans. It is a very important date in the history of two nations - Jews and Poles. The Lodz Ghetto had the second largest Jewish population (after Warsaw) in occupied Poland and it was the longest existing ghetto in Europe. Between 1940 and 1944, over 200,000 people were deported to the ghetto by the Germans.

Before World War II, Lodz was a multi-ethnic city, and its more than 200,000 Jews were the largest national minority. In early 1940,

*A German postcard showing the entrance to the Lodz ghetto. The sign reads "Jewish residential area—entry forbidden." Lodz, Poland, 1940-1941.*

*— US Holocaust Memorial Museum*

the German occupation forces decreed and boxed in a ghetto in Lodz, where the Jews from Lodz and neighboring towns, as well as 20,000 Jews from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Luxembourg and Germany were brought and forced to live.

The ghetto was turned into a large factory making products for the Third Reich. More than 180,000 Jews from the Lodz Ghetto died in the extermination camps and only 13,000, or only five percent of the

*Continued*





*Above: A scene from a street in the Lodz ghetto during World War II is a rare color image of the imprisoned community.*

*At right: The obverse, top, and reverse, bottom, of a 2009 Poland 2 zloty commemorative coin honoring the memory of the many from the Lodz ghetto who perished and the few who survived.*



*Continued*

city's former Jewish population, survived.

Lodz was the last of the Jewish ghettos to be liquidated, yet its early establishment served as a model for establishing the Warsaw Ghetto, as well as other ghettos.

In autumn 1941, German forces began resettling the Jews from Prague, Vienna, Luxembourg and Germany's Berlin, Düsseldorf, Emden, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Cologne. Within one month, 19,954 Jews from Western Europe were

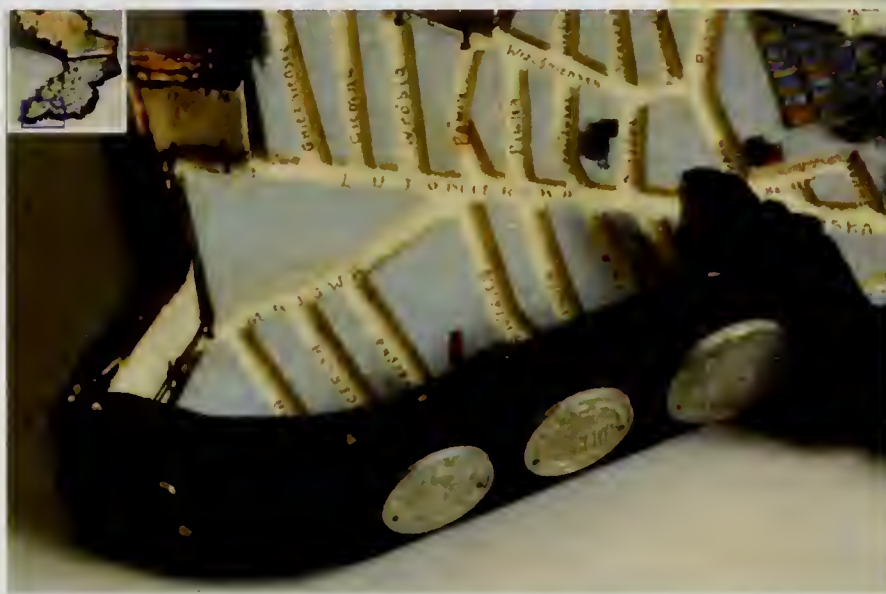
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*At left: Leon Jakubowicz, a shoe-maker by training and a native of Lodz, began constructing this model of the Lodz ghetto soon after his arrival there from a prisoner-of-war camp in April 1940. The case holds a scale (1:5000) model of the ghetto, including streets, painted houses, bridges, churches, synagogue ruins, factories, cemeteries, and barbed wire around the ghetto edges.*

*— USHMM,  
Leon Jacobson Collection*



*Above, and at left: Details of Leon Jakubowicz' model of the Lodz ghetto shows coins attached to the case cover, and the interior of the case lined with a collection of official seals, a ration card, and paper money.*

*— USHMM,  
Leon Jacobson Collection*

*Continued*

deported to the ghetto and, in the following months, another 18,000 Jews from provincial ghettos that had been liquidated.

There were some 100 factories and workshops in the Lodz ghetto (factories for textiles, leather, wood, metal, etc.).

Following more mass re-settlements from January to mid-September 1942, when over 72,000 Jews who either did not work or were incapable of working (the so-called redundant element) were transported to the extermination camp in Chelmno on Ner (Kulmhof am

*Continued*



*At right, top: The obverse, and below, the reverse of a silver 2009 20 zloty coin of Poland commemorating the victims of Lodz, last ghetto left standing in the Third Reich's institutional pogrom, the Holocaust.*

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*Continued*

Ner), the ghetto was turned into a huge labor camp, with employment totalling more than 60,000.

Among the countless tragedies to unfold, one of the most tragic events in the history of the ghetto, the so-called shpere , or deportation of children under 10 and adults aged 65 and above, took place from Sept. 5-12, 1942. The young and old were shipped to death camps.

After the mass exodus, slave labor was done by nearly all the remaining Jews.

Hunger prevailed in the ghetto; death took a heavy toll. People died of strenuous work and widespread disease. The poor living and sanitary conditions caused the death of over additional 40,000 Jews in the ghetto.

German policy dictated that only people capable of working were allowed to remain in the ghetto.

Those incapable of working were sent to death in Kulmhof am Ner, where more than 80,000 Jews were exterminated by the Nazis.

The first transport out of Lodz departed for Auschwitz on Aug. 9, 1944. The Jews were led to believe that they were going inside the Third Reich.



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In reality, all the transports headed for the gas chambers of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp.

More than 67,000 Jews from Lodz were deported by Aug. 29, 1944. According to estimates made by Arnold Mostowicz, a ghetto survivor himself, only 12,000 to 15,000 people survived.

The ghetto ceased to exist. A number of people, about 800, were left behind to clean the Lodz ghetto, and most of them survived. ▢

*Article adapted from material courtesy of the City of Lodz Office and the National Bank of Poland.*

# THE 'EVIL EYE'



## ANCIENT, ICONIC MEDITERRANEAN IMAGE ENDURES THROUGH THE MILLENIA

*Images courtesy Stephen Fregger*

*Above left: The reverse of a double struck prutah shows four cornucopia in an Evil Eye alignment. At right, a typical reverse of a John Hyrcanus prutah.*

BY STEPHEN FREGGER

I recently purchased an enigmatic ancient Judaeen coin from an Internet auction.

The coin is a double-strike “error” of a very common variety bronze prutah minted during the Hasmonean Dynasty reign of John Hyrcanus (135 BCE to 104 BCE).

Normally, the obverse side of these small coins displays a paleo-Hebrew inscription, surrounded by a wreath. The reverse side of the variety normally de-

picts a pomegranate between two cornucopia horns, surrounded by a border of dots.

My double-struck coin shows an obverse side with a jumbled mix of partial inscriptions and wreath portions.

However, it is the reverse of my coin to which I was attracted. The unique reverse side of my coin shows *four cornucopias*, head-to-head, surrounding a single pomegranate. This image was produced when the coin

*Continued*



# EYE ICON DATES BACK MILLENIA



*Modern papyrus painting of the Eye of Horus. (From the author's collection).*

*Continued*

flipped during the minting process, rotated 180 degrees on the die, and was re-struck.

The resulting coin has a reverse side that looks amazingly like the magical “Evil Eye” symbol found among Mediterranean cultures.

The perfect alignment of the four cornucopias during the re-striking appeared to me to be the result of a *deliberate* minting action to produce a personal good-luck talisman, rather than just the happenstance of a minting mistake.

I contacted Judaeen coin expert David Hendin for his opinion on the coin.

Hendin advised me that, although he previously had never seen a coin exactly like mine (with a 180-degree re-strike rotation), he has seen numerous other Hasmonean minting error coins with lesser restrike rotation angles.

Thus, it was his belief that my coin is just a random error. I accept his expert opinion, although I still retain a romantic portion of a doubt.

The strange coin tweaked my interest in the subject of the centuries-old superstition of the Evil Eye.

I discovered that there were many examples of it to be found

*Continued*

# EYES FOUND ON PROTECTIVE AMULETS

*Amulets from the author's collection, dating to circa 600 BCE.*



*Continued*

on Greek and Roman coins, as well as in the mythology, religion, architecture, jewelry, and commerce of the Mediterranean dating back to the ancient Egyptians.

In fact, remnants of the belief exist even today. This article will discuss some of the ways in which cultures have embraced this magical symbol throughout history.

Etymologists use the term “apotropaic symbol” to describe an image such as the Evil Eye. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines apotropaic, as an adjective, “designed to avert evil.” The word comes from Greek (*apotrepein*, to avert : *apo-*, away + *trepein*, to turn), and is a type of magical sign intended to “turn away” harm or evil influences; to avert evil; or attract good luck.

Examples of other apotropaic practices include good luck charms, amulets, or gestures like crossing fingers and knocking on wood.

Ancient Greeks made offerings to the *Averting Gods*, (Ἀποτρόπαιοι θεοί: *Apotropaiōi Theoi*), underworld deities and heroes, to grant them safety and deflect evil.

## Egyptian Eyes

Among the earliest recorded uses of an apotropaic eye as a symbol to ward off evil are those associated with the ancient Egyptian deity Horus.

Horus is most often depicted on the walls and columns of the ancient temples along the Nile as a man with the head of a falcon. He was commonly recorded as the son of Isis and Osiris.

His mythology is complex and convoluted, and will not be detailed here. However, his eye was gouged out in a fight with another god. The eye of Horus was later recovered and offered by him to help restore the life of his dismembered father.

Thereafter, the symbol of the “Eye of Horus” became an

*Continued*



# EYE ICON CENTRAL IMAGE IN CLASSIC ART



*A kylix “eye-cup” used for ceremonial drinks at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Below, the “Siren Vase” in the British Museum with its scene from Homer’s Odyssey.*

*Continued*

amulet associated with healing, restoration and protection.

Stylized funerary representations were enclosed in the wrappings of mummies, and also were worn as amulets by the superstitious public

Antiquity examples of the Eye of Horus range in size from as large as two to three inches in width, to smaller than one quarter-inch, while fabrications ranged from gold and semi-precious stone, to faience or glazed earthenware with a blue or greenish hue.

## The Greeks Had It

Across the Mediterranean, other ancient cultures developed apotropaic superstitious traditions for fending off misfortune. The Greeks produced beautiful examples in their painted pottery, which indicate daily household



*The Siren Cup, c. 470 BCE, with its portrayal of a Greek war galley and Evil Eye.*

applications, as well as record the usage in commerce and warfare.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) collection has a fine example of a Kylix eye-cup (drinking cup) dating from the sixth century BCE. The eyes painted on the cup were thought to prevent evil spirits from enter-

*Continued*

# ANCIENT COINS PORTRAY EYE ICON



*Above: An Abados obol, c. 350 BCE, with the Evil Eye prominent on the prow of a war galley.*

*Above, right: A 1958 5-drachma postal stamp from Greece depicts an ancient Greek war galley with the Evil Eye on the port side of the bow.*

*At right: A second-century CE mosaic excavated at Carthage shows a Roman war galley, also shows the Evil Eye on the pointed, ship-ramming prow.*



*Continued*

ing the mouth, along with the wine spirits.

The beautiful “Siren Vase” (circa fifth century BCE) in the British Museum depicts a scene from *The Odyssey*, where Odysseus is lashed to the ship mast to prevent him being lured by the voices of the Sirens.

Notice the Evil Eye painted on the ship’s prow to deflect misfortune at sea.

In 1958, modern Greece commemorated their ancient sailing

prowess by issuing a 5 drachma postage stamp depicting a trireme with the Evil Eye prominently detailed on the prow.

## The Romans Too

Romans equally embraced the magic of the Evil Eye to protect their ships. A magnificent mosaic (ca. Second century CE) of a Roman trireme warship, complete with Evil Eye, was excavated at Carthage.

The mosaic is now on display

*Continued*



# EYE PROMINENT ON ANCIENT WAR GALLEYS



*At left: A Macedonian coin of Demetrius Poliocetes c. 295 BCE. Above, right, a Roman Republic semi-uncia c 208 BCE. Both coins depict the Evil Eye icon on the war galleys.*

*Continued*

at the Bardo Museum in Tunis.

## The Eyes are on Coins

Ancient Greek and Roman city-states often used their coins to advertise their maritime strengths. Collectors of ancient Greek and Roman coins might be surprised to know that the Evil Eye is hidden in plain sight. If one looks closely at ancient coins displaying a ship, the Evil Eye often is apparent on the ship's prow.

## Evil Eye lives on Today

The Evil Eye lives on today in the prow adornment of the fishing boats in many Mediterranean countries.

Interestingly, the Evil Eye on ships of the sea has morphed to



*A Roman Republic denari of Dominitus Ahenobarbus, c. 41 BCE, with the Evil Eye on a war galley.*

Evil Eyes on ships of the air!

The Turkish airline, *Fly Air*, sported the Evil Eye on the tail-fin of its airplane fleet. Perhaps the symbol could have served the company better, since the airline ceased operations in 2007.

*Continued*

# EYE ICON USED OFTEN IN MODERN TIMES



*A jetliner of the now-defunct Fly Air service based in Turkey. The Evil Eye was integral to the aircraft's corporate paint scheme, but apparently did little; the airline folded in 2007.*

*Continued*

## **Evil Eye in language, commerce, jewelry**

The Evil Eye lives on today in the verbal expressions of Ashkenazi Jews in Europe and the Americas. They routinely exclaim in Yiddish "Kein ayin hora!"

The literal meaning of the phrase is "No evil eye!"

The words are spoken to ward off a jinx after something or someone has been rashly praised or good news has been spoken

aloud.

Finally, the Evil Eye lives on today in the trendy adornment of modern wrists, necks and automobile rear-view mirrors. □



*Steve Fregger is a retired professional engineer and part of the Gator Nation of the University of Florida. He has been a collector of ancient Jewish coins for more than 40 years. His articles have appeared in The*

*Celator and The Shekel magazines. In 2009, he received the Ben & Sylvia Odesser Memorial Award For Outstanding Contributions in Judaic Numismatics.*



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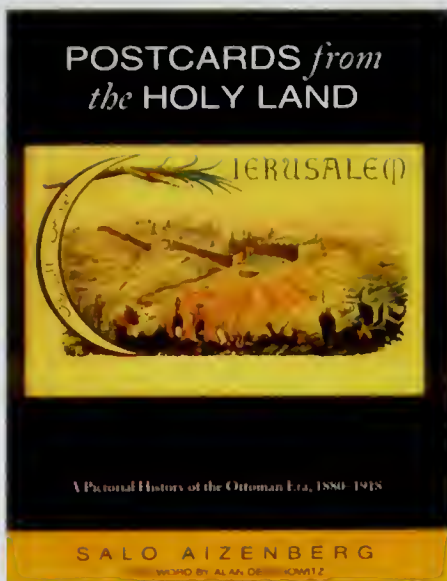
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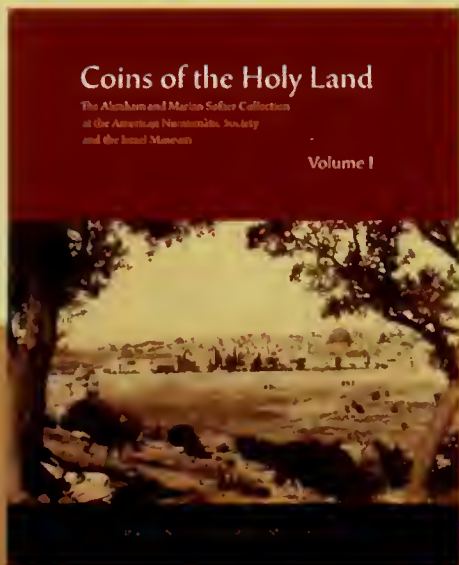
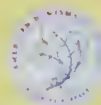
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## Coins of the Holy Land:

The Abraham and Marian Sofaer Collection at the American Numismatic Society and the Israel Museum

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Ancient Coins in North American Collections 8 (ACNAC 8) 2013

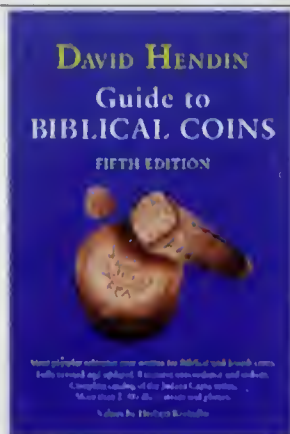
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The book was written by Ya'akov Meshorer with Gabriela Bijovsky and Wolfgang Fischer-Bossert, and edited by David Hendin and Andrew Meadows.

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# CLEAVING TRUTH FROM DISPUTE

*WHEN TWO WOMEN CLAIMED TO BE THE MOTHER OF A CHILD, SOLOMON OFFERED TO SETTLE BY SWORD*



*Portuguese 80mm bronze medal designed by A. Ribeiro and Armindo Viseu is inscribed "Solomon King of the Israelites/Son of David and Batsheva/Skillful ruler/Wise judge." This large medal was recently offered by a Portuguese seller for under \$9 on ebay.*

**T**his medal features the scene that is recounted in 1 Kings 3:16-28. Two young women who lived in the same house and who both had an infant son came to Solomon for a judgment.

One of the women claimed that the other, after accidentally smothering her own son while sleeping, had exchanged the two children to make it appear that the living child was hers.

The other woman denied this and so both women claimed to be the mother of the living son and said that the dead boy belonged to the other.

After some deliberation, King Solomon called for a sword to be

brought before him. He declared that there was only one fair solution: the live son must be split in two, each woman receiving half of the child.

Upon hearing this terrible verdict, the boy's true mother cried out, "Oh Lord, give the baby to her, just don't kill him!" The liar, in her bitter jealousy, exclaimed, "It shall be neither mine nor yours - divide it!"

The king declared the first mother as the true mother, as a true, loving mother would rather surrender her baby to another than hurt him, and gave her the baby. King Solomon's judgment became known throughout all of Israel and was considered an example of profound wisdom. ▢



# EINSTEIN'S GENERAL THEORY CELEBRATED

The discoveries of Albert Einstein revolutionized our understanding of the universe we live in. To honor the legacy of the greatest leap forward in science since Isaac Newton, the Royal Canadian Mint has issued three commemorative bullion coins in 2015.

What were the science discoveries Einstein made a century ago that gave science a great leap forward?

Prior to the publication of "The General Theory of Relativity" in 1915, the universe we lived in was thought to be static, locked into a three-dimensional grid. Time was a constant, the same everywhere. Clocks here ran the same as clocks on the other side of our galaxy, even on the other side of the universe.

In his General Theory of Relativity up-ended that concept of the same time everywhere by stating the laws of physics - not time - are the same everywhere. And these

newly discovered physical laws meant time was special only to each observer. An observer travelling really fast, approaching a significant percentage of the speed of light (299,792,458 meters per second) would experience time moving more slowly than an observer who was not travelling.

Einstein's General Theory of Relativity expanded upon his own 1905 publication of the Special Theory of Relativity, which showed that the speed of light was constant no matter how fast an observer was moving. He then proved that we lived in a universe with more than three dimensions. Time was the fourth dimension, and since it was variable, the space-time "fabric" or continuum of the universe was adjustable, could respond.

In his General Theory of Relativity Einstein included acceleration - or the force of gravity - into the theory, and showed that massive objects caused a distortion in the

*Continued*





*Images courtesy Royal Canadian Mint; bullionexchanges.com*

*In 2015, Canada has issued three distinct commemorative coins, all in silver or gold bullion, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the initial publication of Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. Shown above are, at left, the 10-ounce .9999 fine silver \$100 face value coin (78mm diameter); at top right, the 1/10th ounce .9999 fine gold commemorative, and above right, the one-ounce .9999 fine silver traditional Maple Leaf bullion coin privy marked with the equation that changed our perception of everything.*

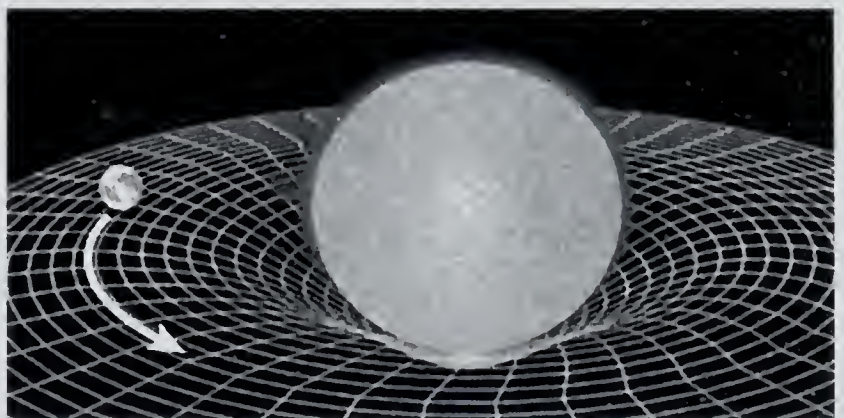
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four-dimensional space-time that we actually live in. Do not worry if this space-time cannot be visualized: no human can visualize it.

But a two-dimension distortion in a three-dimensional model can be used to illustrate kind of what's happening. If the model Sun is like a big ball settled in the middle of a trampoline, a marble-sized planet like the Earth speeding around the Sun could follow the curvature of the Sun's dimple in the fabric in a perfect orbit.

In other words, gravity is nothing more than the bending of space-time, with objects falling through this "curve".

This is all vastly oversimplified, of course. And there are many other aspects of the General Theory that have proven



invaluable in understanding our universe. A key equation in the General Theory:  $E=mc^2$  basically says that matter is energy, and energy is matter.

The conversion of matter into energy, as in nuclear fission, can release enormous energies even at low efficiencies.

These are some of the amazing aspects of Einstein's theories, celebrated this year in three issues from the Royal Canadian Mint. ☐

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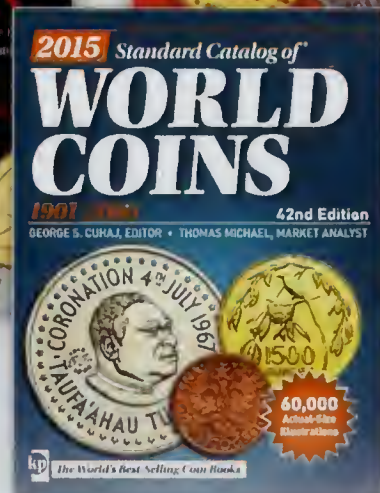
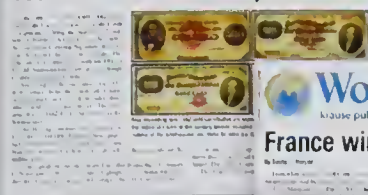
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